

# EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **USAID EXTENDS HEALTH SERVICE IN CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS**

**DHAKA, APRIL 1 --** U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan W. Mozena inaugurated a U.S. Government-sponsored Smiling Sun clinic in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region today. The U.S. Government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is co-funding this clinic in partnership with the Karnafuli Fertilizer Company Ltd. (KAFCO). The clinic marks the first major health project between the United States and the Government of Bangladesh in the Hill Tracts.

Studies indicate that about 82 percent of pregnant women in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) do not receive pre-delivery checkups and 86 percent do not receive post-delivery checkups by any medical service providers. This new clinic will help more than 200,000 women of the CHT to receive essential maternal and child health services, family planning services, and basic health services. The Government of Bangladesh will support the clinics by providing contraceptives and vaccines.

While speaking at this event, Ambassador Mozena said that the United States is keen to expand the partnership with under-privileged communities to promote child and maternal health. The launch of this Smiling Sun Clinic demonstrates the commitment of the U.S. Government to improve health care for children and families across Bangladesh. The Smiling Sun Franchise Program is a USAID flagship health program with 325 health clinics and 8,819 satellite clinics in 64 districts in Bangladesh bringing basic health care services to an annual average of 26 million individuals.

The U.S. Government has provided more than \$5.8 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since 1971, including over \$770 million in the health sector. The United States, through USAID and other U.S. Government agencies, dedicated more than \$180 million in 2011 alone to improve the lives of people in Bangladesh; promote democratic institutions and practices; expand economic opportunity; improve health and education services; increase food security and support Bangladeshi efforts to mitigate the impact of natural disasters.

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